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**MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE TESTIMONY HEARD IN SENATE COMMITTEE**

*Victims of Medical Negligence Urge Support of SB 164*

(February 18, 2008) Denver, Colorado – Members of the Senate State, Veterans and Military Affairs Committee heard testimony from several victims of medical negligence in support of SB 164. The proposed legislation, sponsored by Senate President Peter Groff (D-Denver) and Assistant Majority Leader Terrance Carroll (D-Denver), would increase the current cap on medical negligence non-economic damages from \$300,000 to mirror the \$366,250 cap on general negligence non-economic damages. Originally enacted in 1988, under the Health Care Availability Act, the caps on medical negligence have not been adjusted since 2003.

“Senate Bill 164 is a modest piece of legislation that will ensure that victims of medical negligence, who are injured through no fault of their own, are compensated in a fair and just manner,” said Melissa Kuipers, CTLA’s Director of Legislative Services, who testified on behalf of the bill.

Supporters of SB 164, including several victims of medical negligence turned out to share their stories. Janine Vitetta shared her daughter Krysta’s story in an emotional appeal to members of the committee. At only four days old Krysta developed a fever which was misdiagnosed, leading to bacterial meningitis, a brain injury and subsequently cerebral palsy. Vitetta testified to the merits of SB 164 and described the financial burdens for victims of medical negligence, especially those who are children. Also testifying in support of the bill were Hector Arambulo who is paralyzed as a result of surgery, and Patty Skolnik who lost her son Michael to medical negligence.

By sharing their stories, Janine, Hector and Patty were able to show the very real consequences of medical negligence. Although the impact of SB 164 is small, only 14 medical negligence cases went to a jury in 2007, it is all too real to the victims who lives are affected by such tragedies.

For more information or to speak with Janine, Hector or Patty, please contact Sara Odendahl at 303-831-1192 (office) or 303-506-2348 (cell). A comparison of Colorado’s caps on medical and general negligence is attached for your reference.

*The Colorado Trial Lawyers Association is comprised of Colorado trial lawyers who are committed to the protection and advancement of individual rights and to the advancement of trial advocacy skills, high ethical standards and professionalism in the ongoing effort to preserve and improve the American system of jurisprudence.*

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